



Speech by


Hon. David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

Hansard Wednesday, 13 February 2013

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Natural Disaster Events of 2013, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (2.33 pm): Rain from ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald changed the course of Queensland for 2013 and for some time to come. But floodwaters have now subsided and recovery work has begun. The legacies of the Australia Day floods need to be addressed, and they will be. To sum up the Premier's brief to me, work with councils to build smarter, build better and to make Queenslanders safer. There are some who wonder about the purpose of the word 'resilience' in the new portfolio. It is there to keep in the forefront of people's minds what this government is resolved to do: we are going to build a better, stronger Queensland because, when adversity strikes, Queenslanders respond.

To the thousands of people who have lost everything, we pledge to be there for you. To the communities who feel their towns or cities will never be the same, they will not be. We are committed to make them safer and to protect you better. We will never flood-proof a state like Queensland. We will never ensure that every road and bridge and treatment plant will not be destroyed, but that does not mean we cannot do better. That does not mean that an asset that has been replaced time and time again cannot be done in a better way. To mayors and councillors of Queensland, I give you my deepest commitment to work with you to bring about the results that your communities want and need.

This will come at a cost, but we will find a way because, quite simply, we have to. It will be a long road ahead, but failure is not an option. My role is to turn the disappointment and heartbreak of what happened in so many regional Queensland communities into an opportunity to bring about a safer and less vulnerable future. To do that, the government has appointed disaster recovery coordinators—that is, Assistant Police Commissioner Brett Pointing in Bundaberg and North Burnett, Don Cousins in Northern Queensland and Bill Mellor in Southern Queensland. These three people all have distinguished histories serving their communities and country through large-scale organisational challenges, and they are up to the challenge facing Queensland now.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority will be integral to these efforts, but so will local know-how. People who know their home towns—the mayors and councillors of Queensland—will have a greater say than ever before about how best to protect their assets and indeed their communities. But we will need the financial might of the Commonwealth to turn this dream into infrastructure we can all touch. On this note I want to thank Queensland Senator Bill Ludwig, who has been instrumental in working with the Treasurer to sign the national partnership agreement which has opened the route for the distribution of flood funding. It is a prime example of two levels of government from different political convictions working together to achieve the best for our people. In times of adversity, political colours and allegiances mean nothing; what does is ensuring that the next time Mother Nature strikes we are better positioned to bounce back.